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AT a SPECIAL MEETING of the EMIGRANTS' SOCIETY, held in the Grand Jury Room of the Court-house at Quebec, the 11th October, 1819,

PRESENT,

The LORD BISHOP OF QUEBEC, *V. P.*
The Honorable Mr. JUSTICE KERR,
The Honorable W. B. COLTMAN,
The Honorable W. SCOTT,
Lieutenant Colonel HARVEY, C. B. Dep. Adj. Gen.
Commissary General WOOD,
JOHN WRIGHT, M. D. Inspector General,
Lieutenant Colonel DURNFORD,
Lieutenant Colonel WARDLAW,
The Reverend the Official MOUNTAIN,
The Reverend J. L. MILLS,
The Rev. D. WILKIE,
Deputy Commissary General COFFIN,
Lieutenant JEBB, Royal Engineers,
JOHN STEWART,
BENJAMIN TRIMAIN, }
HENRY BLACK, } Esquires.
JOHN NEILSON, }
JAMES GEORGE, }

RESOLVED—That it appears expedient to the meeting that an address should be drawn up to the Public in Great-Britain and Ireland, soliciting the contributions of the charitable in aid of the funds of the Society; and, at the same time, stating the actual circumstances of distress which many Emigrants have been placed in, and the resources of which they ought to be possessed upon their arrival, to give them a fair chance of ultimate success in establishing themselves in this country.

ADDRESS.

The Members of The Quebec Emigrants' Society, in carrying the above resolution into effect, are anxious to have it understood, in the first place, that it is by no means the principle of their body, nor the object of the present measure, to *discourage* Emigration. On the contrary, they profess themselves deeply sensible of the benefits thence resulting to these Colonies—they truly appreciate these benefits; they would rejoice also in contributing to relieve their Mother-Country from the evils of a redundant population; and they would feel that they had much to answer for, were they to become instrumental in checking this valuable influx of inhabitants into a country, the very face of which invites them, as it were, to the experiment, and opens to their industry vast tracts of land unclaimed from the wilderness, which are capable, under the hand of Art, of yielding the means of sustenance, and the comforts of life, to many millions of human beings.

But the local experience of the last few years has amply shown that some measures are necessary to place the system of Emigration under proper regulations—to provide against many evils and much misery arising from the ignorance and mismanagement of the persons who emigrate—and to preserve, with the smallest possible deductions, the advantages on either side accruing.

Under the influence of these impressions, the Society proceed to state, in a specific form, the objects of the present address—the first of which, is to make an appeal to the compassion and generosity of the British and Irish Public, in behalf of their own countrymen, arriving as strangers in this Province.

The number of Emigrants who have arrived at the Port of Quebec, since the opening of the navigation for the present season, amounts to upwards of 12,000, which probably exceeds two thirds of the population of the City itself.—It will readily be believed, that a very considerable proportion of these are utterly destitute upon their arrival—that such rapid and continued accessions to the number of candidates for labour preclude the possibility of answering the demand for employment—that the scanty and injudicious preparations for the voyage, the crowded and dirty state of the ships, combining with the change of climate, (though the climate of this country is itself healthy) prove the causes of much debility and disease among the Emigrants—that the death of individuals throws whole families upon the public—that shipwreck, with all its accompaniments of loss and hardship, occasionally completes the catalogue of ills—and that, especially as the winter closes in, the Inhabitants of this City have upon their hands an accumulation of misery and distress, for which they are without means to provide any adequate remedy. It has, in fact, been found necessary here, independently of all the other public and private charity extended to settlers, to open a temporary asylum expressly for *destitute strangers*; a great part of which is occupied as an hospital, where at this date, there are between 70 and 80 patients. And had not His Grace the late Governor-in-Chief, with his wonted benevolence, permitted the use of some empty buildings belonging to Government, and provided the attendance of the Medical Staff, with certain other advantages, it would have been found impossible to afford even the degree of relief which has been given.

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The next object of this Address, is to request that steps may be taken to circulate the requisite information among the lower classes at home, and especially in Ireland; in order that it may be generally understood:—

- I. Under what circumstances they may be warrantably encouraged to emigrate.
- II. Under what circumstances they ought to be deterred from the attempt.
- III. What knowledge ought to be possessed, what rules are to be followed, and what plans avoided by those who do emigrate.

The Society therefore beg leave to state their opinion, that persons with families, possessing a sufficient sum to support them for one year after their arrival in this country—or single men, with a provision something less, who are able-bodied, and either expert in agriculture or masters of any of the *common mechanical trades*—provided they are of steady, correct, industrious habits, and of enterprising characters, may fairly be encouraged to transfer their homes to this country, and to expect a better fortune than is likely to await them by any opening presented in their own. In many cases, it would be highly useful, if the funds of the Society could be made capable of rendering some degree of assistance to persons of this description.

But with respect to persons differently situated, and of a different stamp—persons who abandon their homes in a vague expectation of relief from *change*, because they are not thriving where they are; and who land upon these shores in a destitute condition, and without energy to struggle with difficulties, the Society can promise them only disappointment and increased misery: and the case is daily to be witnessed, of those who have been lured hither by false and interested representations, but whose wish and prayer, upon their very arrival, is to obtain the means of returning. The Society have actually, in some instances, been obliged to employ their funds in sending back deluded and helpless beings who had avowed themselves from all the dependence which they could count upon for support in this world. It appears also, from the public return. It is very important to impress the conviction, that there are three articles of expence absolutely necessary to the preservation of life itself in this climate, of which a much inferior provision will answer the purposes of existence in others; the articles namely of clothing, fuel, and a compact lodging; to which it must be added, that there are various sources of employment for the Poor, connected with husbandry and navigation, which are wholly suspended during a Canadian winter.

The cases, however, of those who arrive in this country in a forlorn and distressed condition, are infinitely multiplied by the want of information under which the parties act. The season at which the vessel sails, and the port to which she is bound, as its situation respects their ulterior progress, are two points of considerable moment. It ought to be their endeavour to have before them, as much as possible, upon their arrival, the open portion of the year. And it is a very common circumstance, that emigrants are brought *here*, whose destination is in some part of the United States, or of the British Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, where they have particular inducements to go; to gain which points from Quebec, is perhaps a matter of much greater difficulty and expence, than to go direct to them from Great Britain or Ireland. Several women, with families, coming lately to join their husbands at the points above-mentioned, have been led to suppose, that their object would be as readily attained by taking a passage to Quebec, which they have reached without the means of proceeding farther.

It is essential, therefore, that persons emigrating to America should be furnished with some degree of geographical information. And if they hesitate under what government to place themselves in this quarter of the globe, it may be very honestly recommended to them, to forbear from changing masters. Of those who have recently made their election in the United States, it is a fact personally known to members of the Society, that large numbers have found their advantage in resuming their allegiance, and have made application to the British Consul at New York, for aid to effect a removal into Upper Canada; practically disproving an opinion, which has a pretty general influence, as to the superior inducements of Foreign America.

With respect to that frequent separation of families which has been adverted to—the husband, or the father, coming alone to try the country, and sending afterwards for his household, or perhaps returning to fetch them out, the Society can by no means recommend this experiment, unless the parties are so situated that a considerable *present sacrifice* will not eventually distress them. Not only is much time lost, perhaps at a season which renders it highly valuable—not only is the difficulty and expence attending a removal across the seas, inevitably increased by this practice; but it constantly happens, that the family upon their arrival at Quebec, are utterly at a loss to trace the person whom they have come to seek; and there are some instances within the knowledge of the Society, where the hope of doing so seems almost gone.

It might be productive of incalculable benefit to the cause of Emigration, if certain Associations were formed in different places at home, composed of intelligent and benevolent individuals, who would open a correspondence with the Society here, and furnish information to the parties upon the spot. The materials for such associations exist abundantly in Great Britain and Ireland; and the Quebec Emigrants' Society entertain a confident hope, that neither the distance at which they act, nor the inferiority of their own pretensions, will cause their appeal to be disregarded, or deprive them of that encouragement and assistance, which they anxiously solicit. They trust that they are engaged in a good work, and in the prosecution of their endeavours they look to the co-operation of good men, and the blessing of God above.

Mr Nathaniel Wilson Esq Great Winchester Street, London, has been requested to communicate with His Majesty's Government, upon the subject, & to receive communications from individuals at home. — The Lord Bishop will receive those addressed to London.

**They ought not, upon any account, to sail later than the 1st of June.*

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